



# The Tragedy of Coriolanus:

Actus Primus. Scena Prima.

Enter a Company of Mutinous Citizens, with Staves, Clubs, and other weapons.

1. Citizen.

Before we proceed any further, heare me speake.

All. Speake, speake.

1. Cit. You are all resolu'd rather to dy then to famish?

All. Resolu'd, resolu'd.

1. Cit. First you know, Caius Martius is chiefe enemy to the people.

All. We know't, we know't.

1. Cit. Let vs kill him, and wee'l haue Corne at our own price. Is't a Verdict?

All. No more talking on't; Let it be done, away, away

2. Cit. One word, good Citizens.

1. Cit. We are accounted poore Citizens, the Patricians good: what Authority suffers one, would relieue vs. If they would yeelde vs but the superfluitie while it were wholsome, wee might guesse they relieued vs humanely: But they thinke we are too deere, the leanesse that afflicts vs, the obiect of our misery, is as an inuentory to particularize their abundance, our sufferance is a gaine to them. Let vs reuenge this with our Pikes, ere we become Rakes. For the Gods know, I speake this in hunger for Bread, not in thirst for Reuenge.

2. Cit. Would you proceede especially against Caius Martius.

All. Against him first: He's a very dog to the Commonalty.

2. Cit. Consider you what Seruices he ha's done for his Country?

1. Cit. Very well, and could bee content to giue him good report for't, but that hee payes himselfe with beeing proud.

All. Nay, but speake not maliciously.

1. Cit. I say vnto you, what he hath done Famously, he did it to that end: though soft conscienc'd men can be content to say it was for his Countrey, he did it to please his Mother, and to be partly proud, which he is, euen to the altitude of his vertue.

2. Cit. What he cannot helpe in his Nature, you account a Vice in him: You must in no way say he is covetous.

1. Cit. If I must not, I neede not be barren of Accusations he hath faults (with surplus) to tyre in repetition.

Shows within.

What showts are these? The other side a th City is risen: why stay we prating heere? To th Capitoll.

All. Come, come.

1. Cit. Soft, who comes heere?

Enter Menenius Agrippa.

2. Cit. Worthy Menenius Agrippa, one that hath alwayes lou'd the people.

1. Cit. He's one honest enough, wold al the rest wer so.

Men. What work's my Countymen in hand?

Where go you with Bats and Clubs? The matter Speake I pray you.

2. Cit. Our busines is not vnknowne to th Senat, they haue had inkling this fortnight what we intend to do, w now wee'l shew em in deeds: they say poore Suters haue strong breaths, they shal know we haue strong arms too.

Menen. Why Masters, my good Friends, mine honest Neighbours, will you vndo your selues?

2. Cit. We cannot Sir, we are vndone already.

Men. I tell you Friends, most charitable care Haue the Patricians of you for your wants.

Your suffering in this dearth, you may as well Strike at the Heauen with your staves, as lift them

Against the Roman State, whose course will on

The way it takes: cracking ten thousand Curbes

Of more strong linke asunder, then can euert

Appere in your impediment. For the Dearth,

The Gods, not the Patricians make it, and

Your knes to them (not armes) must helpe. Alacke,

You are transported by Calamity

Therether, where more attends you, and you slander

The Helmes o'th State; who care for you like Fathers,

When you cuse them, as Enemies.

2. Cit. Care for vs? True indeed, they nere car'd for vs

yet. Suffer vs to famish, and their Store-houses cram'd

with Graine: Make Edicts for Vsurie, to support Vsur-

ers; repeale daily any wholsome Act established against

the rich, and prouide more piercing Statutes daily, to

chaine vp and restraine the poore. If the Warres eate vs

not vppe, they will; and there's all the loue they beare

vs.

Menen. Either you must

Confesse your selues wondrous Malicious,

Or be accus'd of Folly. I shall tell you

A pretty Tale, it may be you haue heard it,

But since it serues my purpose, I will venture

To scale't a little more.

2. Citizen. Well,

He heare it Sir: yet you must not thinke

To fobbe off our disgrace with a tale:

But and't please you deliuer.

Men. There was a time, when all the bodies members

Rebell'd against the Belly; thus accus'd it:

That onely like a Gulfe it did remaine

a a

Tch

FINIS

